IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claims 1 and 5 and AMEND claims 2, 4, 6-8, 11, 12, 14 and 18 in accordance with the following:

1.   (CANCELLED)

2.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim ~~1~~<u>6</u>, wherein said management server is made to store and manage said compound contents previously received from said intermediate apparatus and said instruction information which corresponds to said compound contents by association, and said method further comprises:

making a decision as to an identity between said instruction information produced in said instruction information production and said instruction information stored in said management server; and

executing an in-management-server first control , when the decision shows the produced instruction information is identical with said instruction information stored and managed in said management server, using said compound contents stored in a state associated with the stored instruction information as said compound contents to be delivered to said portable terminal in said delivering and, when the decision shows no identity therebetween, transmitting the produced instruction information to said intermediate apparatus.

3.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 2, wherein a plurality of intermediate apparatuses each identical with said intermediate apparatus are provided, and in said decision as to identity, a decision is additionally made as to the degree of similarity between the produced instruction information and said instruction information stored in said management server, and in said in-management-server first control, when a decision result in said decision as to identity shows that the produced instruction information is not identical with said instruction information stored and managed in said

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management server, the produced instruction information is transmitted to said intermediate apparatus to which compound contents information is returned with respect to, of said instruction information stored and managed in said management server, said instruction information which is decided to be most similar to the produced instruction information.

4.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim ~~1~~6, wherein a plurality of intermediate apparatuses each identical with said intermediate apparatus are provided, and in said management server, a processing load monitoring is implemented to monitor a processing load in said converting unit and an in-management-server second control is provided to transmit said instruction information produced in said instruction information production to said converting unit having a smallest processing load based on ~~the basis of~~ a monitor result from said processing load monitoring.

5.   (CANCELLED)

6.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~A compound contents delivery method according to claim 5,~~ A compound contents delivery method of a delivery system having a plurality of contents servers to which a plurality of contents having a length of time are distributed to be stored in their contents storage units, respectively, a management server for managing delivery of contents to a portable terminal, and an intermediate apparatus for mediating supply of contents from said plurality of contents servers to said management server, where the delivery system deliveries a compound contents to the portable terminal, said method comprising:

outputting, in said management server, outputting instruction information for production of the compound contents to said intermediate apparatus based on a substance of said compound contents to be produced, the compound contents being a combination of a plurality of contents portions in time series, and each contents portions being partially fetched in time dimension from one of the contents stored in one of the storage units;

executing a contents portion fetching instruction, in said intermediate apparatus, instructing said contents servers to fetch contents portions needed for production of the compound contents according to said instruction information outputted;

executing a compound contents element acquiring and transmitting, in each of said contents servers, acquiring a compound contents element in corresponding relation to said contents portion which is an object of the fetching instruction in said contents portion fetching

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instruction, converting the acquired compound contents element in an encoding format for said portable terminal, and transmitting the acquired and converted compound contents element to said intermediate apparatus;

executing a production operation of, in said intermediate apparatus, combining said compound contents elements received from said contents servers according to time series based on instruction information from said management server thereby producing compound contents oriented to said portable terminal; and

delivering, in said management server, said compound contents produced in said production operation to said portable terminal, and

wherein, in said compound contents element acquiring, said intermediate apparatus stores and manages said compound contents elements returned from said contents server in the past, and said contents portion fetching instruction includes an in-intermediate-unit duplication decision operation of obtaining information for specifying contents portion needed for the compound contents production from said instruction information and making a decision as to a degree of duplication in substance between said contents portion needed for the compound contents production and said compound contents element stored and managed in said intermediate apparatus; and

providing a fetching instruction to said contents server based on a decision result of said in-intermediate-unit duplication decision operation,

wherein, in said executing of the fetching instruction, based on the basis of a the decision result in said in-intermediate-unit duplication decision operation, said fetching instruction is not given to said contents server with respect to a duplicate portion between a substance of said contents portion needed for the compound contents production and said compound contents element stored and managed, and a compound contents element corresponding to said duplicate portion is used in producing said compound contents in said production.

7.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 56, wherein, in said executing of the fetching instruction, on the basis of a decision result in said in-intermediate-unit duplication decision, when the substance of a portion of the contents portion needed for the compound contents production is duplicate with respect to said compound contents element stored and managed, said fetching instruction on a contents portion non-duplicate with respect to said compound contents element is given to said contents server.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 16, wherein each of said contents servers stores and manages said compound contents element returned in said compound contents element acquiring in the past and said compound contents element acquiring includes:

an in-contents-server duplication decision operation of making a decision on the degree of the duplication in substance between the contents portion which is an object of said fetching instruction in said contents portion fetching instruction and said compound contents element stored and managed in said contents server; and

a compound contents element reply operation of, on the basis of a decision result in said in-contents-server duplication decision, fetching said contents portion, which is an object of said fetching instruction, from said contents storage unit and making a conversion into an encoding format for said portable terminal to return it as a compound content element to said intermediate apparatus.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 8, wherein, in said compound contents element reply operation, on the basis of the decision result in said in-contents-server duplication decision operation, of said contents portion which is an object of said fetching instruction in said contents portion fetching instruction, a portion duplicate in substance with respect to said compound contents element stored and managed is not fetched from said contents storage unit while a compound contents element corresponding to the substance duplicate portion is returned to said intermediate apparatus.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 8, wherein, in said compound contents element reply operation, on the basis of the decision result in said in-contents-server duplication decision operation, of said contents portion which is an object of said fetching instruction in said contents portion fetching instruction operation, a portion non-duplicate in substance with respect to said compound contents element stored and managed is fetched from said contents storage unit and, after a conversion is made into an encoding format for said portable terminal, the non-duplicate portion is returned as a compound contents element to said intermediate apparatus.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 16, wherein, in said contents server, on the basis of popularity, important event and the

like, a contents portion expected to be an object of said fetching instruction in said contents portion fetching instruction is stored and managed as said compound contents element in advance.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 16, wherein each of said contents distributed to said plurality of contents servers includes data having a time zone including voice data or motion picture data and said contents portion is arranged through the use of the voice or motion picture data partially extracted from said time zone.

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A compound contents delivery method according to claim 12, wherein, in said contents portion fetching instruction in said intermediate apparatus, said contents portion for the compound contents production which is an object of said fetching instruction is designated by designating information about a service location on the internet having said contents portion, a time zone of said contents portion, a media assortment or an encoding condition after the encoding conversion.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A compound contents delivery system including a plurality of contents servers to which a plurality of contents are distributed to be stored in their contents storage units, respectively, a management server for managing delivery of contents to a portable terminal, and an intermediate apparatus for mediating supply of contents from said plurality of contents servers to said management server, where the delivery system deliveries a compound contents to the portable terminal

said management server comprising:

a compound contents acquisition unit for acquiring said compound contents through outputting instruction information for production of said compound contents to said intermediate apparatus based on a substance of said compound contents to be produced, the compound contents being a combination of a plurality of contents portions in time series, and each contents portions being partially fetched in time dimension from one of the contents stored in one of the storage units, and

a delivery unit for delivering said compound contents acquired by said compound contents acquisition unit to said portable terminal; and

said intermediate apparatus comprising:

a contents portion fetching instruction unit for instructing said contents servers to fetch contents portions needed for production of the compound contents when receiving a request for the compound contents production and said instruction information from said compound contents acquisition unit,

a production unit for combining compound contents elements received from said contents servers according to time series based on said instruction information from said management server thereby producing compound contents oriented to said portable terminal,

a compound contents outputting unit for outputting said compound contents produced in said production unit to said compound contents acquisition unit of said management server; and

each of said contents servers comprising:

a compound contents element acquiring and transmitting unit, for acquiring a compound contents element in corresponding relation to said contents portion which is an object of the fetching instruction in said contents portion fetching instruction unit, converting the acquired compound contents element in an encoding format for said portable terminal, and transmitting the acquired and converted compound contents element to said intermediate apparatus, and

wherein when acquiring said compound contents element, compound contents elements returned from said contents servers in the past is stored, contents portion needed for the compound contents production from said instruction information is specified and a degree of duplication in substance between said contents portion needed for the compound contents production and said compound contents element stored is determined, and

a fetching instruction is provided to said contents server based on a decision result of said determination.

15.   (ORIGINAL)   A compound contents delivery system according to claim 14, wherein said management server includes an in-management-server storage management unit for storing and managing compound contents returned from said intermediate apparatus in corresponding relation to said instruction information in a state where said compound contents are associated with said instruction information.

16.   (ORIGINAL)   A compound contents delivery system according to claim 14, wherein said intermediate apparatus includes an in-intermediate-apparatus storage

management unit for storing and managing said compound contents element returned from said contents server through the use of said compound contents element acquisition unit.

17.   (ORIGINAL)   A compound contents delivery system according to claim 14, wherein each of said contents servers includes a storage management unit for storing and managing a compound content element from said compound contents element acquisition unit.

18.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of contents delivery in a delivery system having a plurality of contents servers, comprising:

fetching contents portions corresponding to compound contents in response to instruction information and converting the contents portions fetched in an encoding format for a portable terminal;

producing compound contents oriented to said portable terminal by combining the contents portions according to time series based on the instruction information; and

delivering the contents portions to the portable terminal, where the compound contents is a combination of a plurality of contents portions in time series, and each contents portions is partially fetched in time dimension from one of contents stored, and

said fetching designates only content portions that is not stored as having been previously returned and having a degree of duplication relative to content requested in the instruction information.